



## The Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR HUNTER  
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE

25 July, 2008

Mr Sean Gough  
Chairman  
Wollombi Valley Against Gas Extraction  
C/- General Store  
WOLLOMBI NSW 2325

Dear Mr Gough

Thank you for your letter dated 21 July, 2008 on behalf of the WAGE action group extending an invitation to attend the meeting on Saturday 9 August.

Unfortunately I am unable to attend the meeting due to a prior commitment, however I recently met with Mr Andy Lukas, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Sydney Gas and Mr. Mark Harper, General Manager to discuss in detail its coal seam methane exploration activities in the Hunter.

During the meeting we discussed Sydney Gas' need to improve communication with the local community and the processes it must adhere to during exploration to protect the local environment.

I appreciate that gas exploration may cause disturbance during drilling and I have been assured by the CEO that the drilling of core holes and test wells will be temporary.

Coal seam gas exploration is regulated by the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI). The legislation includes casing requirements for core holes and test wells to prevent impact on water aquifers, noise restrictions, strict site rehabilitation standards and best practice drilling techniques.


Since Sydney Gas is regulated by the NSW DPI, I would encourage you to raise any concerns you may have directly with that department. If the state regulations governing these activities are being breached and are not being addressed by the NSW DPI, please do not hesitate to bring this to my attention.

Mr Lukas has given me his personal assurance that Sydney Gas will respond directly to community concerns in a timely manner. He advised that the General Manager, Mr Mark Harper could be contacted directly by concerned residents at the following address:

Sydney Gas  
Level 11  
1 O'Connell Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000  
Tel: 029253 5555  
Email: [mark.harper@sydneygas.com](mailto:mark.harper@sydneygas.com)

Be assured I am watching with interest the activities of gas exploration in your community.

Yours sincerely



Joel Fitzgibbon MP

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### Electorate Office

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### Ministerial Office

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